

Focus. . . Missouri Hospital Patterns

There are currently 124 general medical surgical hospitals that provide community care to an estimated 5,402,000 Missourians. In 1983 there were 150. Twenty-six hospitals in the past fifteen years have closed, merged, and/or transited to a different service area or function. Twenty-two of these were general medical surgical facilities. Since that time, the number of hospital beds has decreased by over 7,600. Since 1983, the discharge rate has decreased from 178 discharges per 1,000 population to 132.2 per 1,000.

The information shown in Table 1 does not include state, federal, and specialty hospitals. Two state facilities, the University of Missouri Hospital and Clinics and the Missouri Rehabilitation Center, are included because the majority of their admissions are medical surgical patients. Characteristics for Missouri's general hospitals are shown in the table.

Trends to Outpatient Care

More health care services are being provided on an outpatient basis. Outpatient surgeries have steadily increased in the past 15 years. Sixty-four percent of surgeries were performed as outpatient in 1998 compared with twenty-six percent in 1983. In 1998 there were as many outpatient surgeries as inpatient surgeries in 1983. The total surgeries in Missouri hospitals in 1998 were about the same as the total hospital surgeries 15 years ago. The number of surgeries in hospitals have been affected by the past decade's growth of ambulatory surgery centers (ASCs). In 1983 there were 7 freestanding ambulatory surgery centers. Today there are 43 reporting nearly 83,000 surgical procedures.

Inpatient Utilization is Declining

The number of hospital inpatient days continues a steady downward trend. The hospital licensed-bed occupancy rate declined from 74 percent in 1983 to 44.8 percent in 1998. Missouri's staffed-bed occupancy rate of 56.7 for general medical surgical hospitals continues to be higher than the U.S. staffed-bed occupancy average of 47 percent. The following table (Graph 2) illustrates the inpatient rate decline from 1983 to the present.

Emergency Room Visits

Emergency room utilization is highest for persons under 15. The rate in 1997 for this age group was 113.6 per 1,000 persons. The rate for persons over 65 is 23.9 per 1,000 population. The uninsured population using Missouri hospital emergency rooms were 310,858 in 1997 and has not changed much in the last five years. Emergency room use rates rose at a steady rate until 1992, and then leveled off. There was a slight increase in the 1998 rate for the total population.

Reason for Change in the Number of Hospitals

Currently there are 26 fewer medical-surgical hospitals than there were in 1983. Mergers and consolidation of services have changed the number of facilities providing hospital care. In the past 15 years, these 26 have changed their services, combined with other hospitals or closed. There are currently fewer general hospitals and more specialty hospitals. Missouri has two rehabilitation hospitals, eighteen psychiatric, three long-term care, and one children's orthopedic hospital. There are three pediatric medical-surgical, and one hospital specifically for psychiatric care. Eleven closures in the past 15 years have been in rural communities. Most closures occurred in the late 1980's and early 1990's. In general, these hospitals had a small patient volume and were near another facility. Table 2 shows some characteristics of these closed hospitals.

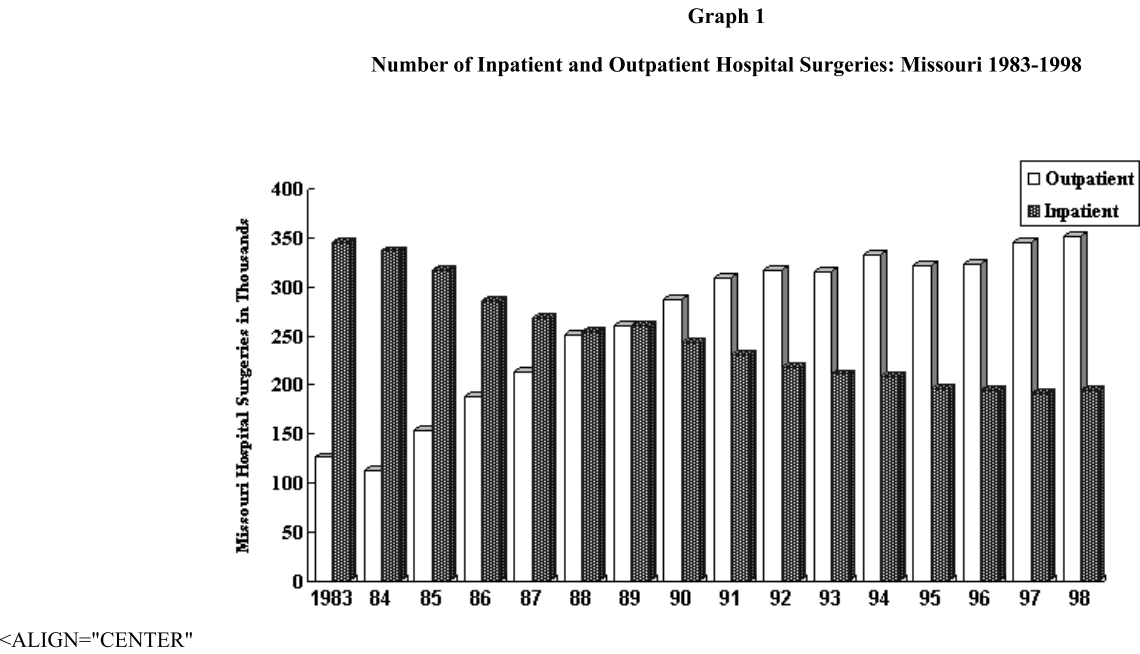
Utilization in Missouri hospitals has been moving downward for some time. Inpatient days and average length of stay continue to decline. Changes in occupancy rates, duration of stay, and number of staffed beds is partly due to the rise in outpatient care. Managed care limits affect admitting decisions and when a patient is discharged. Even though there are more people with fewer hospitals and fewer beds, occupancy continues to decline. Ambulatory surgery centers are replacing some inpatient and outpatient surgery hospital functions. New procedures, technology, and home health care have reduced the need for longer hospital stays.

Table 1

Number of Missouri General Hospitals, Staffed Beds, Inpatient Days, Occupancy and Average Length of Stay, 1983-1998

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Hospitals</i>	<i>Staffed Beds</i>	<i>Patient Days</i>	<i>Staffed Bed Occupancy</i>	<i>Average Length of Stay</i>	<i>Discharges</i>	<i>Discharge Rate Per 1,000</i>
1983	150	27,201	6,876,900	70.9	7.7	885,098	178.0
1984	150	26,559	6,310,767	66.3	7.5	858,341	171.6
1985	146	25,123	5,736,455	63.3	7.4	786,259	156.1
1986	146	24,568	5,615,649	62.6	7.4	765,588	151.1
1987	144	24,256	5,489,552	62.0	7.5	734,526	143.8
1988	140	23,898	5,367,303	61.5	7.5	716,452	139.4
1989	137	23,605	5,384,307	62.5	7.5	716,465	140.5

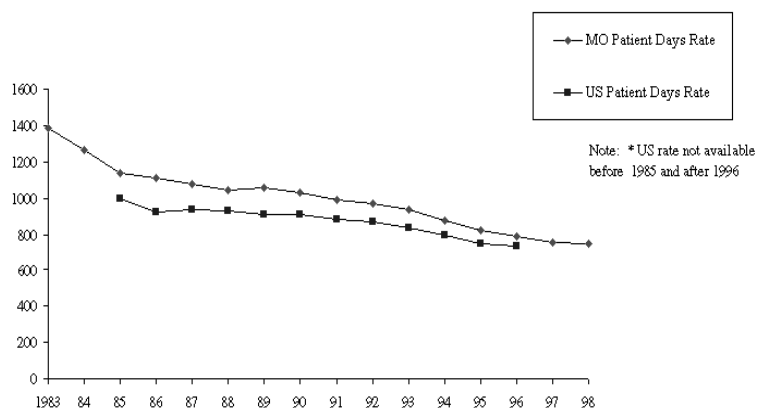
1990	137	23,460	5,286,795	61.7	7.4	711,966	139.1
1991	136	23,270	5,109,877	60.2	7.3	693,037	134.3
1992	133	22,813	5,046,200	60.6	7.3	684,321	131.8
1993	131	22,994	4,912,479	58.5	7.2	674,798	128.9
1994	131	22,215	4,616,936	56.9	6.7	680,000	128.8
1995	131	20,982	4,382,022	55.9	6.4	683,682	128.4
1996	126	20,237	4,192,272	56.8	6.1	697,144	131.3
1997	125	19,844	4,053,716	56.0	5.8	695,992	129.8
1998	125	19,587	4,053,475	56.7	5.6	714,377	132.2



Graph 2

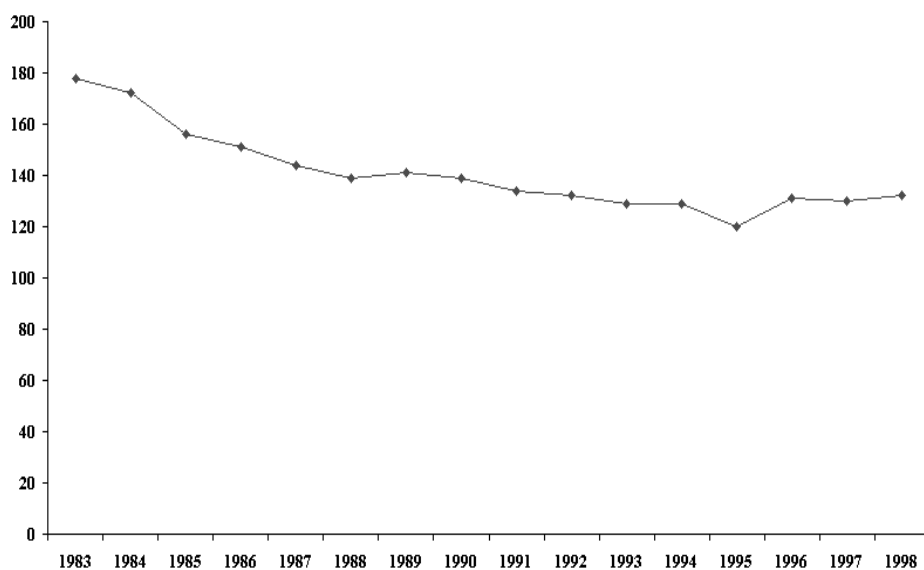
Rate of Hospital Inpatient Days per 1,000 Population:

Missouri and United States 1983-1998



Graph 3

Rate of Emergency Room Visits in Missouri Hospitals per 1,000 Total Population: 1983-1998



Provisional Vital Statistics for April 1999

Live births increased slightly in April as 6,630 babies were born compared with 6,577 in April 1998. The monthly birth rate increased from 14.7 to 15.2 per 1,000 population.

Cumulative births decreased for the 4 months ending with April, but increased for the 12 months ending with April.

Deaths increased in April as 4,519 Missourians died compared with 3,609 in April 1998. Cumulative deaths were up for the first one-third of the year, and virtually the same as the previous year for the 12 months ending with April.

The **Natural increase** for Missouri in April was 2,111 (6,630 births minus 4,519 deaths). The rate of natural increase was 4.8 per 1,000 population in April.

Marriages increased for all three time periods shown below, which reverses a downward trend in recent years.

Dissolutions of marriage decreased for all three periods in the table below.

Infant deaths increased in April as 63 Missouri babies died compared with 47 in April 1998. For the 12 months ending with April, the infant death rate increased slightly from 7.5 to 7.7 per 1,000 live births.

PROVISIONAL RESIDENT VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE STATE OF MISSOURI

April			Jan. - April cumulative			12 months ending with April		
Item	Number	Rate*	Number	Rate*	Number	Rate*	Number	Rate*

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
Live Births	6,577	6,630	14.7	15.2	25,167	24,828	14.1	13.9	74,452	75,313	13.7	13.7	13.8
Deaths	3,609	4,519	8.1	10.4	19,292	19,939	10.8	11.1	54,040	54,026	10.1	10.0	9.9
Natural increase	2,968	2,111	6.6	4.8	5,875	4,889	3.3	2.7	20,412	21,287	3.6	3.8	3.9
Marriages	2,853	3,153	6.4	7.2	10,703	10,823	6.0	6.1	43,813	43,915	8.4	8.1	8.1
Dissolutions	2,006	1,850	4.5	4.2	8,309	8,070	4.6	4.5	25,600	25,560	4.8	4.7	4.7
Infant deaths	47	63	7.1	9.5	213	197	8.5	7.9	561	581	7.9	7.5	7.7
Population base (in thousands)	...	...	5,439	5,470	...	...	5,439	5,470	...	...	5,379	5,418	5,449

*Rates for live births, deaths, natural increase, marriages and dissolutions are computed on the number per 1,000 estimated population. The infant death rate is based on the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births. Rates are adjusted to account for varying lengths of monthly reporting periods.

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